Autonomic E-Mail Processing System and Method

Abstract

Systems and methods for processing autonomic e-mails, which each have at least one unique identifying number attached to them, are disclosed. Internally within an organization, e-mails are often sent to multiple recipients, such as to all members of a particular distribution list, to request information or ask that a task be performed by one or more, but less than all, of those recipients. The disclosed systems and methods help minimize the overall time burden to those recipients in responding to or trying to track such e-mails, and help the sender and recipients alike more easily view, manage and control such e-mails and their ultimate disposition, including the sender's e-mail and the plurality of responses sent by recipients. Separate viewable areas for each string or chain of related autonomic e-mails within each user's e-mail in-box and other e-mail storage areas are provided. These areas are preferably organized in a certain hierarchical manner and facilitate the user's ability to review and process such e-mails with greater dispatch and confidence. The e-mail's sender and at

least certain recipients can help decide whether to terminate a particular thread of autonomic e-mail communications by designating it as completed or canceled. In either such situation, those e-mails which have not yet read by recipients can be moved to a "completed" folder or deleted altogether. This in turn saves the review time of those recipients who have been away or too busy to check the e-mails within their respective in-boxes.